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# The Hosted Exchange 2003 Experience: How Rich E-Mail Can Enhance Your Business Life

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## **Your Internet service provider and Hosted Exchange**

Microsoft Hosted Exchange 2003 offers Internet service providers the mobile data connection features that small-business owners need.

### **Hosted Exchange Benefits**

- You can synchronize your calendar and e-mail at wireless hot spots like the airport, certain coffee shops, and even certain fast-food restaurants.
- You can schedule meetings, assign tasks, maintain your schedule, and manage your time more efficiently.
- You can synchronize your Microsoft Windows Powered Pocket PC Phone Edition or Windows Powered Smartphone with the latest e-mail messages and calendar items wherever you are.
- You can have a reliable full mobile data backup service and storage location for emergencies.

## **Executive Summary**

As a small-business owner, you are more mobile today than ever before, and your mobile device is a critical tool that you use on a daily basis. Wherever you are—in the office, in the car, or at the coffee shop—you need to be able to communicate quickly and efficiently with your customers. Wouldn't it be nice if your Internet service provider could give you rich e-mail to help you do that? One that offers you flexible communication options through your e-mail, contacts, and calendar, wherever you need them?

Rich e-mail can give you the tools and services you need to make your business more efficient and productive in a competitive world. The rich e-mail features provided by Microsoft® Hosted Exchange 2003 through your Internet service provider help you minimize costs, communicate efficiently and securely with your customers, and provide customers with great service by staying up-to-date with their needs.

Through a series of scenarios, this white paper describes true-to-life experiences of business owners like you who have benefited from the rich e-mail environment that Hosted Exchange provides. The scenarios include:

Scenario 1: The Sole Proprietor—Catherine's Story

Scenario 2: The Partner—Patrick's Story

Scenario 3: The Franchise Owner—Pedro's Story

Scenario 4: The Consultant—Stuart's Story

Read on to see how rich e-mail works for them and how it can also work for you to enhance your business life.

## **Scenario 1: The Sole Proprietor—Catherine's Story**

Catherine is 58 years old and is thrilled with her life. After 20 years in corporate-cube life, Catherine launched out on her own to do what she really loves—shopping! Catherine's innate sense of style had always been somewhat stifled by the suits and skirts of her corporate life. She longed to break free and experiment with the newest styles and designs she saw in the fashion districts. She wanted to shake things up, and now she could do that in her own storefront. Voila! The Fabrikam, Inc., apparel shop was born and, after only five years, was thriving with \$500,000 in annual sales.

Although Catherine's main business focus is her brick-and-mortar store, she has recently branched out on the Web and has a virtual storefront provided by her Internet service provider. The provider helped her set up her virtual storefront and manages it for her for a small monthly fee. The Web has been a great investment for Catherine; Fabrikam's annual sales have increased to \$700,000 in the 18 months the store has been online.

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With the increased sales, however, came other challenges. One challenge was the increased costs for using next-day delivery to send customers important information that would not be secure on the free e-mail program she used. Catherine knew she could save \$18 on a single rush delivery from Seattle to New York by using encrypted e-mail. Another challenge was the need to more efficiently track e-mail she receives from her customers and the replies she sends to them, which her e-mail program could not do. And of course, all this new electronic commerce and communication greatly increased the amount of time Catherine needed to spend in front of her computer each day. Since leaving her corporate career, Catherine's favorite part of owning her own business had been starting her day at her neighborhood café over a cup of vanilla cappuccino, savoring the morning sunshine and the newspaper for a little while. However, with her Web sales heating up, Catherine's increased computer time was threatening to edge out the morning coffee routine.

When Catherine mentioned these dilemmas to her Internet service provider, she was thrilled to find that they had an answer for her: rich e-mail. Rich e-mail has safeguards in place to help keep Catherine's e-mail safe and secure, which substantially reduces the need for next-day document delivery. Rich e-mail also has a tracking feature that helps organize the communication Catherine has with her customers. And, perhaps best of all, rich e-mail gives Catherine access to her e-mail at the café or any other wireless hot spot she might choose. Rich e-mail does all the work of making sure her mailbox and contacts are always up-to-date.

The people at the café still see Catherine every morning—now with her laptop in tow. She still orders her vanilla cappuccino and savors the morning sunshine, but the newspaper is no longer her reading material. Now she answers her e-mail more securely, tracks and monitors customer e-mail, and plans her spring buy with her new Web customers in mind—all thanks to the rich e-mail environment provided through her Internet service provider.

## **Scenario 2: The Partner—Patrick's story**

Patrick Sands is a flying man. No, he's not a pilot or a circus performer. He's the traveling partner in the A. Datum real-estate law office. He doesn't mind it; traveling is kind of fun when you get used to it. He enjoys the new cities and the everyday people he meets along the way: the cab driver, the waitress at the local diner, and the concierge at his favorite hotel. Patrick has always been a rolling stone and a people person. His job choice gives him the best of both worlds.

The only gripe he had with his traveling life was that he sometimes felt disconnected from the people back at the office. He missed the information they had access to and sometimes felt out of the loop. He'd always been great at making sure he had the necessary information at hand for his planned meetings and appointments; it was the unplanned things that were catching him off guard. He was caught many times without pertinent information that was in the e-mail he read but didn't print. He found himself telling a client more than once, "I'll call you back once I have my e-mail in front of me." He said it too many times, and he didn't want to say it again.

When he expressed his frustration to his partner, Peter Houston, Peter let him know about the new, rich e-mail service their Internet service provider offered, based on Hosted Exchange. Peter explained that he could get access to his e-mail, calendar, and group folders anywhere he had access to a Web browser, a mobile device, or even a laptop. Patrick was intrigued by the richness of features he could get from a browser client that uses Microsoft Outlook® Web Access (OWA), but he was not yet sold.

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A short while later, sitting in the airport on his way out of town, Patrick found that he would have the chance to let OWA prove its worth! Peter called and said that the big fish they were trying to reel in for the past six months had asked for a conference call in an hour. They wanted to discuss the service proposal that was in the group folder on Microsoft Outlook. Of course, Patrick had not printed the proposal before leaving the office. If the previous six months were any indication, this call was going to be a tough negotiation—one for which Patrick knew he would need that proposal.

Patrick was elated to discover that the airport had a Web kiosk in its business center. He logged on to Outlook Web Access and felt like he'd found a long-lost friend. The familiar sight of his inbox and group folders began to calm his nerves, and as he navigated to the group folder that contained the big proposal, he heaved a sigh of relief. Patrick waited for the phone conference to begin with a knowing smile on his face—thanks to rich e-mail, the big fish would be supper in no time.

Weeks later, after the big deal was signed, Patrick bought a brand new laptop equipped with wireless access and learned that his favorite coffee shop offered wireless access. Furthermore, the value of his investment increased when he learned that he was not bound to kiosks at airports, like he was when trying to close the deal. Now he can carry his e-mail, calendar, and collaboration info with him in his laptop with Microsoft Office Outlook 2003.

### **Scenario 3: The Franchise Owner—Pedro's story**

Pedro Gutierrez wanted the good life and couldn't see how it would ever be his as an insurance salesman. When he discovered the opportunity of owning a franchise insurance office, he found a partner named Linda Contreras, saved every dime, and learned everything he could about business ownership. Two years ago, Pedro and Linda realized their dream and became the proprietors of Humongous Insurance.

One advantage to being the co-owner of an insurance company is that you have flexibility in your daily schedule. Pedro uses this flexibility to see his son Scott's soccer games whenever possible. When choosing an Internet service provider, Pedro and Linda were careful to choose a company that offered rich e-mail, because they knew it was designed to meet the needs of the businessperson on-the-go. And on-the-go describes Pedro well. Today, he's off to another game, heading across town under a threatening sky.

One disadvantage to being co-owner of an insurance company is that you are on call all day, every day. Pedro and Linda must authorize all claim payments that come through the office, and because their customers are waiting for those claim dollars, Pedro and Linda must be reachable whenever their customers need them. Pedro previously used a Blackberry and his mobile phone to keep up with customers' needs, but making sure that the information was consistently shared between the two devices became a job in itself.

Now Pedro uses Hosted Exchange, which supports multiple mobile devices accessing the same mailbox, calendar, and contact information, and helps consolidate the information he needs. Therefore, he can use the Microsoft Windows® Powered Pocket PC Phone Edition, which provides seamless connection to his contact and calendar information—in addition to phone service—all in one device. Linda uses the Windows Powered Smartphone—a phone that also synchronizes with her Hosted Exchange mailbox—in order to keep her calendar and contacts up-to-date at all times. With these two devices connected to Hosted Exchange, Pedro and Linda can be sure that whenever customer information changes, those changes are reflected on their mobile devices.

That will come in handy today as traffic grinds to a halt and the impending storm breaks. The wind picks up violently, and Pedro knows there will likely be wind and water damage to the homes and cars of his clients as a result of this storm. In the old days, he would have

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been in a panic to be stuck in traffic at such a time, far from his customers' important policy information. Today, he sits back and watches Mother Nature's fireworks, knowing that thanks to rich e-mail, he has access to the information he needs and will be ready for his customers when they need him.

## **Scenario 4: The Consultant—Stuart's Story**

Consulting is all about billability, and to be billable, you need to be on your way to somewhere all the time. That's the mantra Stuart Munson lives and breathes as Proseware, Inc., an independent technology consultant to small-business owners. His job is to help his clients make the most of the rich e-mail environment that their Internet service providers offer. Stuart has a Pocket PC and an assistant named Peter. He has no real office and no desk that he's tied to—Stuart carries his office with him wherever he goes. He loves the freedom this affords, even if the risks make him somewhat wary.

Today, for example, is not a day for taking risks. Today he is helping Patrick Sands at A. Datum real-estate law office set up and use rich e-mail. A. Datum is a big client for Stuart, and he wants to make sure that everything goes smoothly. Stuart uses his Pocket PC Phone Edition to hold all his important client information, so he feels confident that the day will unfold as planned, with no surprises. But sometimes even the best-laid plans can go awry.

As Stuart walks quickly down the sidewalk to A. Datum office, he doesn't see the bicycle courier zipping around the corner. The courier clumsily zigs, Stuart makes an exaggerated zag, and almost succeeds in leaping out of the way. But the bike's handlebar catches Stuart's hip, sending his Pocket PC flying through the air. It lands on the sidewalk with a sickening crunch just in time for the bicycle's back wheel to crush it mercilessly. Stuart winces, then reaches quickly to check the Pocket PC. No good—his Pocket PC is out of commission, and so is he if he doesn't quickly find a way to regain the data he stores on it.

Luckily, Stuart's assistant has wondrous powers of restoration. When Stuart calls with his tale of woe, Peter quickly calls their service provider to request the most current full-data backup. After swinging by the local electronics store for a replacement Pocket PC, Peter brings the device to the service provider (a mobile operator) for a data refill. Wisely, Stuart had listened to Peter when he explained the importance of choosing a service provider that offers rich e-mail, which includes full mobile data backup services and storage for businesses such as Proseware, Inc., and for days such as this.

As Peter delivers the new, fully functional, information-filled Pocket PC to his boss, he congratulates himself on choosing rich e-mail and for saving the day for their client. Stuart congratulates himself for choosing such a great assistant, and settles in to work, showing Patrick and A. Datum how rich e-mail can work for them too.

## **Conclusion**

You can put rich e-mail to work for you by using an Internet service provider that offers Hosted Exchange. Hosted Exchange offers rich e-mail features that will enhance your business, so that you can:

- Like Catherine, save money on overnight document delivery and maximize your e-mail efficiency through secure delivery and e-mail tracking services.
- Like Patrick, enhance your billability by using a combination of Outlook Web Access, Outlook 2003, and wireless hotspots.
- Like Pedro, be more responsive to your customers through Hosted Exchange, which supports mobile access devices like Pocket PC Phone Edition and Smartphone.

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- Like Stuart, keep your customers happy by using emergency backup services for your important mobile data devices.

For more information about how you can use rich e-mail through Hosted Exchange to enhance the way you do business, see your value-added reseller or your Internet service provider.